SWANKY

RETREATS

TRAVEL OUTSIDE THE OBVIOUS

Swellegant Stays

VISIT…

LANZAROTE
Caliente.COM

497 Travel Awards
7000 Acres
5 Decades
1 Perfect moment

The best.

The most.

The first.

Since it opened as the first resort in the Dominican Republic, Casa de Campo has been a favorite luxury destination for discerning travelers the world over. Exclusive villas, breathtaking accommodations, Three Pete Dye golf courses, 8 world class restaurants, private jet service, a marina, equestrian center, shooting course and 3 pristine beaches await.

Discover more at casadecampo.com.do • res1@ccampo.com.do • 800-877-3643

CASA de CAMPO®
RESORT & VILLAS

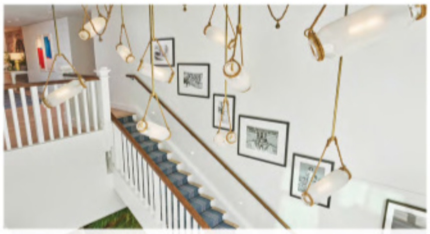
LEADING HOTELS®

Forbes TRAVEL GUIDE

Four Diamond Award

GREAT GOLF RESORTS OF THE WORLD

CONTENTS



3-9 | **SWELLEGANT STAYS**

10-16 | **GASTRONOMIC GALLIVANTS: PALAZZO DI VARIGNANA**

17 | **DEB'S SWANK PICK**

SWANKY RETREATS SALES DIRECTOR:
Partners@SwankyRetreats.com

www.SwankyRetreats.com

Swanky Retreats (Volume 7, Issue 4; ISSN 2469-6854, Published Quarterly by Caribbean Living Magazine, Inc., 14359 Miramar Parkway #435, Miramar, Florida 33027. ©2022 by Swanky Retreats Magazine, Inc. All Rights Reserved. Publisher assumes no liability for the representations contained herein.

Swanky Retreats is not responsible for the return or care of unsolicited material. No part of this publication may be reproduced in any form without the prior written consent of Swanky Retreats or Caribbean Living Magazine, Inc. Printed in the USA

Image Cover Credit:
The Seabird Resort
Oceanside, California

On Instagram
@SwankyRetreats

On Twitter
@SwankyRetreats

On Facebook
Facebook.com/SwankyRetreats

THE SWANK TEAM

ALEXANDRA MAE

EDITOR-AT-LARGE

When you look up "wanderlust" in the dictionary odds are that a picture of me is in the definition.

ANDREW INNERARITY

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY

I prefer to let the images do the talking.

AVA ROSALES

FEATURES EDITOR

Wherever the destination may be, it's the villa life for me.

DYLAN BENOIT

CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

I'm a chef with Champagne taste and a beer budget, but always seem to find myself surrounded by the most amazing people in the most amazing places. From eating termites in the Honduran jungle to learning how to make dim sum in Hong Kong, for me treasure is in the story.

JEFFREY SOBEL

CO-EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

All I need is a book, a bourbon and a boat to a new destination -
I'll be just fine.

SERGIO OLIVARES

CREATIVE DIRECTOR

When I am not at a music concert, you might catch me hunting down new and exciting roads to drive on the weekends. "I live my life a quarter mile at a time." - Dom Toretto.

SOPHIE IBBOTSON

EDITOR-AT-LARGE

I'm an entrepreneur, writer, and lover of wild places. I like nothing more than exploring new destinations with extraordinary landscapes, rich cultures, and preferably a sprinkling of remarkable wildlife, too. A jaw droppingly beautiful place to stay is the icing on the cake.

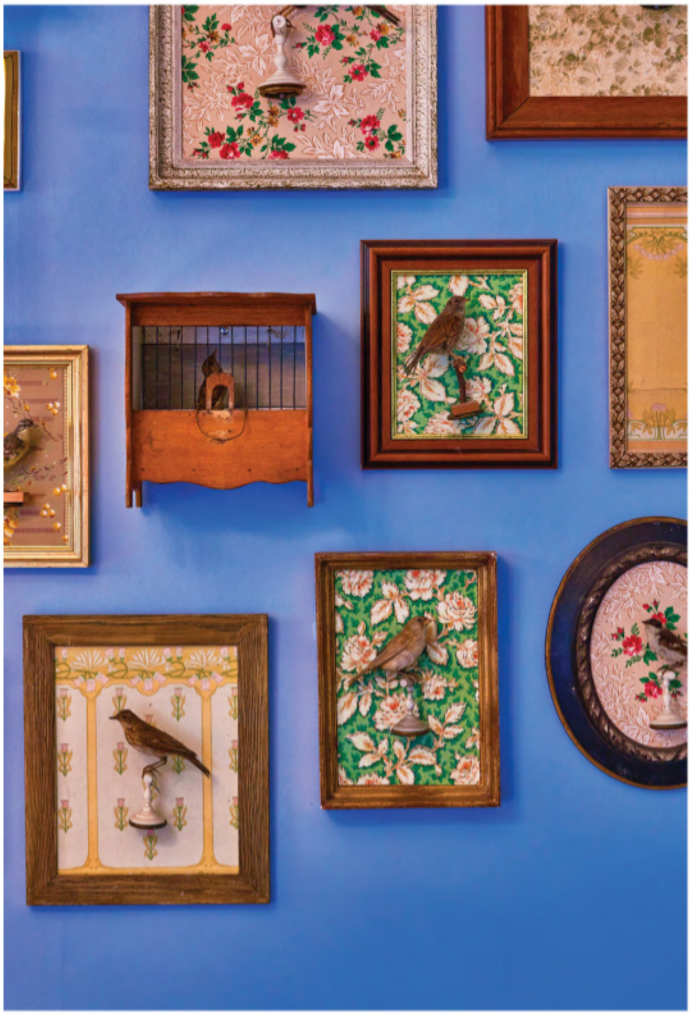
SWELLEGANT STAYS

The indefinable sense of style that makes us swoon: swanky, swell & elegant.

The Bird
Bath, England

Ornithophobic? If you are afraid of birds you had probably better stay away from this brilliantly bonkers bird-themed hotel in the popular British tourism destination of Bath. Though the city typically sells itself on its Roman baths, Regency architecture, and connections with Jane Austen, The Bird shows off Bath's more youthful, creative side. It's the ideal spot to stay for those who want to be within easy walking distance of the tourist sites but enjoy a more contemporary style.

THE BIRD
BATH



The Bird is a large stone property looking out across Bath Rugby ground and to Bath Abbey beyond. The lobby and living room feel like part of someone's home, with plenty of comfortable armchairs and couches scattered with bright cushions, eclectic artwork on the walls, and a pantry where you can help yourself to soft drinks and snacks. The staff may be at the desk (which is decorated with a collage of porcelain plates painted with birds), or in the bar downstairs: the atmosphere is wonderfully casual, though there's always someone nearby to help.

Rooms and suites are divided between the main house and the garden; they're all spacious and brilliantly designed. Whichever room you choose, there will be intriguing art to admire, lush fabrics, and theatrical touches such as free-standing copper baths, gilded mirrors, and even chandeliers.

Meals are served at Plate, The Bird's restaurant, which has indoor space but also a terrace for al fresco dining and transparent domes for those days when you'd love to be outside but the English weather is being, well, English. Whatever you plan to eat, start with a cocktail: the cocktail menu is bird-themed, too, with fabulous illustrations of our feathered friends. Start with a Kingfisher (sake, ginger, and vermouth, topped with prosecco) or Robin (vodka, cointreau, and lemon marmalade), and segue via dinner to the Bald Eagle (bourbon, armagnac, and banana) for the ultimate night cap.

www.thebirdbath.co.uk

THE SEABIRD

MISSION PACIFIC

The Seabird and Mission Pacific
Oceanside, California

A quintessential Southern California surf town, Oceanside enjoys fabulous weather year-round and pristine coasts with culinary adventures, boutique shopping and artistic treasures. Once a hangout for soldiers from the nearby military base, Oceanside has leveled up drastically in the last couple of years. This is thanks in no small part to the arrival of two new resorts The Seabird and Mission Pacific Hotel in 2021. Since the twin hotels opened side-by-side, just steps from the beach, Oceanside's popularity as a chic beach destination is soaring.

Mission Pacific is a luxurious sanctuary with a laid-back atmosphere that speaks to sophisticated travelers who want to splurge on five-star experiences but also appreciate Oceanside's unpretentious vibes. Throughout the property, earthy textures and artisan touches abound, thanks to the design by award-winning firm EDG and complemented by local artwork curated by the Oceanside Museum of Art.

An expansive rooftop pool and jacuzzi with private cabanas offer a perfect vantage point to take in panoramic Pacific views, and an expertly restored 1940s vintage beach Rambler provides guests with everything from sunscreen to surfboard rentals for a day in the waves. There is also a 24-hour fitness center, a library, and 13,000 square feet of ocean-view function space. But the real winners are the spacious rooms, which feel restful and welcoming thanks to warm tones and textures, along with smart technology that allows you to choose between lighting options, plus big balconies on which to enjoy a glass of wine with a sea view.

The Seabird next door totally reimagines the concept of a beachfront resort as a fashionable coastal escape that appeals to romantic couples as much as families or groups of friends. The designer ensured that the local surf culture runs through every part of the hotel, and both rooms and lobby here feel more like a big family beach house complete with a tastefully rendered nautical theme.

The hotel has a sweeping pool deck with wide ocean views. The indulgent Sunny's Spa and Beauty Lounge offers what it terms 'farm-to-sea' holistic care with ritual experiences and beachy sun-relief treatments alongside traditional spa offerings like facials and massage. Elsewhere on the property, there is a stylish wood-paneled library, and OMA West, a rotating art gallery at that serves as an extension of Oceanside Museum of Art.

Together, Mission Pacific and The Seabird mark the largest oceanfront development in San Diego County in 50 years, and the future looks very bright for Oceanside.

www.missionpacifichotel.com
www.theseabirdresort.com

GASTRONOMIC GALLIVANTS:

PALAZZO DI VARIGNANA

Story By Sophie Ibbotson

MANY YEARS AGO...

I was told that the difference between French and Italian cooking is that in France, it's all about the skills of the chef; and in Italy, it's all about the quality of the ingredients. This may be an oversimplification but it's a description which stuck in my mind, and after countless visits to Italy — most of them with food on my mind — I don't recall a single meal where the ingredients were anything less than mouthwatering. I have eaten my way across Rome, Naples, Venice, Verona, and beyond. But just before COVID hit, a friend asked if I'd visited the food capital of Italy. The what?! How come I'd let that slip by?

The province of Emilia Romagna is the home of Parmesan cheese, the finest balsamic vinegars from Modena, Prosciutto di Parma ham, and mortadella, the soft salami which appears on breakfast buffets and sharing platters across Italy. There are extensive vineyards and olive groves, too, producing some of the top wines and olive oils in the Mediterranean. The travel restrictions of the pandemic meant that I had to wait rather longer than I would have liked to visit Emilia Romagna, but as if I were in anticipation of an excellent meal, my appetite simply grew and grew.

Emilia Romagna's administrative centre is Bologna, packed with Renaissance churches, UNESCO listed porticos, leaning towers, and one of the oldest universities in Europe. The city has direct connections to many destinations, making it an easy transport hub, but for this culinary extravaganza I knew I wanted to leave the metropolis behind and stay as close as possible to the producers growing and processing the ingredients which would end up on my plate. In short, I wanted a farm-to-table experience where the farm and the table were in the same place.

Palazzo di Varignana is just 15 miles from the centre of Bologna, a 20-minute train ride away. The palazzo (palace) itself dates from 1705 and is a grand building occupying a commanding hilltop position, with sweeping views over vineyards and olive trees, with more agricultural land stretching out on the plain as far as the eye can see. It has always been a working estate, but in the last few years it has entered into a new stage of life as Italy's preeminent agritourism resort.

Agritourism has connotations of farm stays, charming, rustic experiences with simple amenities. Palazzo di Varignana has taken inspiration from this concept but transformed it into a luxury experience for those who want to enjoy the beauty of the countryside and understand where their food has come from, but to do so whilst staying in top quality accommodation, with all the facilities and services to be expected of a 5-star resort.

The first thing I noted on arrival is that Palazzo di Varignana's architects have created a complex at one with the landscape. The new buildings are contemporary in style, built from natural materials, and in some cases are partially embedded in the hillside so their shape doesn't detract from the views. Subterranean tunnels link rooms to the reception, a restaurant and bar, and spa, so you are very much at one with the earth. Balconies, terraces, and windows are oriented to look straight out at the hills and ensure that wherever you sit or stand, you are unlikely to be overlooked.

ONE THING...

you do get a glimpse of from most rooms are Palazzo di Varignana's trails. At check-in every guest is given a map of the estate with suggested walks, and there are bicycles to borrow, too. Thinking I'd better earn the feast I was sure to come later in the evening, I set out on a half-hour circular stroll which took me past infinity pools and sculptures to a peaceful olive grove of ancient trees. The benches are carefully positioned in places where you might want to take a rest, or at least sit and reflect upon the majesty of nature. I didn't venture down into the vineyards, their vines cascading in rows below me on a slope, as darkness was drawing in, but was reassured to think that the wines I hoped to try at dinner had come from just a few hundred feet away.

There are two main restaurants at Palazzo di Varignana, fine dining restaurant Il Grifone, an opulent space within the palazzo; and Aurevo, a more casual dining restaurant in a contemporary glass cube. I stayed two nights at the palazzo and made sure to eat at both: it would have been a tragedy to come all that way and not indulge at every opportunity!

The nighttime walk to Il Grifone is magical, as although it is only a few minutes' away from the guest rooms, that is still sufficient time to gaze up at the bright stars and appreciate the silence of the air, a rarity in hectic modern life. The palazzo is strikingly lit, and it's a wonderful nod to the building's heritage that its tiny chapel has been preserved, the doors left open should you want to pop in and say a prayer.

UP THE STEPS...

and through the main entrance, the atmosphere immediately changes. Now you're a guest in an opulent residence; I wondered for a moment if I was here for dinner or a ball. There's a grand piano in the hallway, glitzy chandeliers, and a level of gold in the decor that might be over the top elsewhere, but here in Italy is the epitome of elegance and sophistication. I had every faith that the food would be everything I'd waited not-so-patiently for months to taste, and Il Grifone's chef ensured I was blown away.

Given the choice, I will always opt for a tasting menu. It's not just because I'm greedy, but because a tasting menu gives the chef the opportunity to showcase their most creative ideas, their skill, and the freshest seasonal ingredients. And those ingredients, after all, were the raison d'etre for my trip. It also saves me choosing between dishes which all sound tantalising, and means I taste new combinations of flavours which I might not otherwise select from the menu.

And that is how, foodie friends, I first tried white chocolate and raspberries with anchovies and olive oil. It's a desert I raised both eyebrows to when I heard it announced and which I approached with a certain amount of trepidation. But what I've learned is that a chef will never put a dud dish on a tasting menu; everything is perfectly curated to dazzle your senses and expand the horizons of your palate. It was the fitting finale to a meal which constantly surprised me, from the eel and anchovy with chestnut purée and pomegranate, to the most succulent ribbon of pink duck I've ever been fortunate enough to place upon my tongue.

The accompanying wines, as promised, were all made from grapes grown on the Palazzo di Varignana estate. They were so beautifully paired with the dishes that I promptly added "hold luggage" to my flight ticket home, enabling me to pack a few bottles for later. The memories of that meal and of my stay at Palazzo di Varignana will last long after the wine is drunk, but I have at least prolonged the pleasure a little longer.

www.palazzodivarignana.com

Deb's Swank Pick

Winter 22/23

TEQUILA
KOMOS
AÑEJO
CRISTALINO
KOMOS
KOMOS

TEQUILA KOMOS

Tequila Komos respects tradition but is not bound by the past, using global inspiration and an innovative spirit to create something truly extraordinary. The Komos Collection features expressions that appeal to both light and dark spirit drinkers: an Añejo Cristalino, Reposado Rosa, and Extra Añejo. This portfolio is the highest rated ever, with the first perfect 100-point rating from The Tasting Panel Magazine. Their one-of-a-kind craft results in special tequila for when you want the best.

www.siptequila.com/collections/tequila-komos

Costs:
- Añejo Cristalino $120
- Reposado Rosa $110
- Extra Anejo $399

CREDITS

SWELLEGANT STAYS

Pages: 4-6
The Bird

Pages: 3, 7-9
The Seabird and Mission Pacific

GASTRONOMIC GALLIVANTS: PALAZZO DI VARIGNANA

Pages: 10-16
Palazzo di Varignana

DEB'S SWANK PICK

Page: 17
Tequila Komos

Caribbean living

IT'S AN ATTITUDE™

Jewelry

Clothing

Accessories

Attitude

Shop our collections
on Instagram and Facebook

@CaribbeanLivingStore

@Caribbean_Living_Store

Have you seen our sister publication, Caribbean Living?
Pick up a copy or subscribe today!
Spitfire 8
emotion KAYAKS
caribbean
TRAVEL beyond the beach
living
www.CaribbeanLivingMagazine.com